

Small Business Committee and Entrepreneurship members Senators JOHN KERRY of Massachusetts, TOM HARKIN of Iowa, BEN CARDIN of Maryland and JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire, along with Senators BARBARA BOXER of California and BOB CASEY of Pennsylvania, have joined me as cosponsors of this bill.

The Small Business Access to Capital Act of 2009 contains several of the initiatives President Obama highlighted in his speech yesterday, including raising the limits on SBA loans to as high as \$5.5 million. Coupled with lower-cost capital available to community lenders, these higher loan limits will further spur small business growth and aid in our nation's continued economic recovery.

I have made increasing access to capital for small businesses a top priority within my Committee since the day I became Chair, leading my first Committee event on this topic in January. Since that first roundtable, Senator SNOWE and I helped pass the Recovery Act's small business provisions that eliminated SBA loan fees for borrowers to make capital more affordable, increased the loan guarantees on SBA's largest loan program to reduce risk for banks and encourage them to lend when the economy was at its worst, and created initiatives to help unfreeze the secondary market for SBA loans so that banks would have more capital to lend small businesses. These provisions, as I mentioned earlier, helped some 33,000 businesses receive \$13 billion in capital, saving or creating 325,000 jobs.

I have also held four additional hearings and roundtables focused on increasing access to capital for entrepreneurs. Most recently, an oversight hearing on October 6 focused on what in the Recovery Act has been implemented and what additional steps Congress needs to take. Increasing loan limits was a main focus.

In addition to making greater access to capital a top priority since and prior to my becoming Chair, I have specifically supported increasing the loan limits for the past two Congresses, voting favorably for this increase in the last two SBA reauthorization bills out of the Senate Small Business Committee. My bill goes above and beyond these increases because in this recession small business needs are greater than ever before, and the programs have not been updated in many years.

The bill I am introducing today increases the maximum 7(a) loan from \$2 million to \$5 million, increases the maximum 504 loan from \$1.5 million to \$5.5 million, and the maximum microloan from \$35,000 to \$50,000. These are all provisions that have been championed by my colleague and Ranking Member, Olympia Snowe, in S.1615, the Next Steps for Main Street Act. Additionally, the bill includes a provision to allow businesses to use 504 loan guarantees to refinance existing business debt and allows microloan inter-

mediaries to have greater access to technical assistance grants. The bill also increases the amount that a New Market Venture Capital Company can invest in any one company, helping fast-growing businesses located in areas with chronic underemployment.

The Recovery Act included a controversial provision that exempts the National Institutes of Science (NIH) from participating in the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. This provision could cost small businesses as much as \$230 million in lost R&D work, impacting the development of needed military and medical technologies and therapies. In addition, it directly counters the goals of the Recovery Act to create high-paying jobs, spur innovation and boost America's competitiveness. This bill contains a provision to correct this unfair exemption by requiring NIH to obligate \$150 million of the Recovery funds it received to be used for SBIR and STTR projects.

Last, the bill amends the America's Recovery Capital (ARC) loan program, enacted as part of the Recovery Act, so that businesses with existing SBA 7(a) loans can access this financing. The temporary ARC program offers interest-free loans to viable small businesses, which carry a 100-percent guaranty from the SBA to the lender and require no fees paid to SBA. Loan proceeds are provided over a six-month period and repayment of the ARC loan principal is deferred for 12 months after the last disbursement of the proceeds. Repayment can extend up to five years.

With small businesses making up the largest source of employment in this country, and the national unemployment rate still too high, changes like these are vital to the success of our small businesses and the competitiveness of our nation. I look forward to working with President Obama and his Administration, Ranking Member SNOWE and my Senate and House colleagues to quickly pass this critical legislation and send to the President for signature.

RECOGNIZING CAMDEN AEROJET WORKERS

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I am joined with my colleague, Senator PRYOR, to recognize the Aerojet-General Corporation's Camden, AR, production facility. The Camden facility recently achieved the milestone shipment of its 5,000th MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor to Raytheon Missile Systems and the U.S. Navy. Aerojet is a world-recognized aerospace and defense leader principally serving the missile, space propulsion and armaments markets. This most significant milestone will be commemorated with a celebration ceremony held in Camden, AR, on Wednesday, October 28, 2009.

The MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor provides the main propulsion for the standard missile 2 (SM-2), the U.S.

Navy's primary surface-to-air air defense weapon. SM-2 is an integral part of the AEGIS weapon system aboard Ticonderoga-class cruisers and Arleigh Burke-class destroyers. The MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor also is the second stage propulsion for the Navy's newest defensive weapon, the standard missile 6 extended range active missile, SM-6, which will provide extended range anti-air warfare capability over both sea and land. The MK 104 also is utilized on the standard missile 3, SM-3, for aegis ballistic missile defense, BMD, from the sea missions.

Aerojet has manufactured the MK 104 dual thrust rocket motor since 1987 at its Camden facility. The Standard Missile family of products, which also includes the MK 72 booster and MK 125 warhead, are noteworthy elements of Aerojet's industry-leading tactical propulsion portfolio produced in Camden.

On the occasion of this milestone, Senator PRYOR and I are proud to join together and lend our voices to congratulate and honor the nearly 600 Aerojet workers in Camden, AR, on a job well-done. You have served our State and our Nation admirably for more than 20 years.

TRIBUTE TO CLARA KIRCHER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have been privileged to meet so many people in my 35 years in the Senate. One who will always stand out is Clara Kircher, who stayed with me in my office for over a quarter of a century, leaving as deputy chief of staff when she retired.

She is a remarkable woman who, on her own, raised her family, giving them the best example of a strong, talented, and loving woman. She did the same in my office, mentoring so many, and showing by example that she could keep a 50- to 60-hour week and still go back to college.

Marcelle and I consider her one of our dearest friends, and we were privileged to be with her when she was inducted into the hall of fame at Elizabeth Seton High School in Bladensburg, MD. I ask unanimous consent that the statement they made about her at that induction be printed in the RECORD as an example to everybody in the Senate family.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ELIZABETH SETON HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Clara Smiley Kircher was born on May 3, 1945 in Washington, D.C., the daughter of Ann and Golden Smiley. She grew up in Mt. Rainier, MD, and attended Saint James Elementary School. She was accepted into the first freshman class at Elizabeth Seton High School in 1959 and graduated from Seton in June 1963. At Seton, she was a member of the Glee Club, Masque and Gavel, basketball team, Future Nurses Club, Student Council, Louise de Marillac and Honor Society. She attended Saint Joseph's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland, where she majored in business, from 1963-1965. She married Walter Kircher from Riverdale, Maryland, at Saint

James Church in April 1965. Her Maid of Honor was Monica Kircher Brady, her best friend at Seton since their sophomore year. Clara and Walter had five children—Anne, Walter, Eric, Anthony and Aaron. Their marriage ended in 1978, and Clara had to raise their five children as a single parent.

Clara went to work in the office of U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) in October 1981. She served as the assistant to the Chief of Staff and the Press Secretary. After twenty-six years in the Senate, she retired in October 2007 as Deputy Chief of Staff to Senator Leahy. While working for Senator Leahy, she returned to college to complete her degree. In May 1996, she graduated summa cum laude from Bowie State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration. As Deputy Chief of Staff to Senator Leahy, Clara helped establish the Leahy Women's Economic Opportunity Conference which is now in its 13th year. The Leahy Women's Conference focuses on the career and business development of Vermont women and is open to all women free of charge. Women learn the skills of running their own business, writing a financial plan, and sharpening their computer and personal skills for a new job or career change. She was the intern coordinator for the Leahy College Internship Program, which offers young women and men the opportunity for a close-up view of their government and the workings of a Senator's office. Clara also served as the Chief Financial Clerk for the Senate Judiciary Committee where she helped with the administration of the Committee and prepared committee budgets for Chairman Leahy.

In November 2008, she temporarily returned to the U.S. Senate to help start up the office of the newly-elected Senator Mark Warner (D-VA). In March 2009, she went back to her retirement life and is now enjoying time with her children and eleven grandchildren. Two of her granddaughters have followed their Grandmother's footsteps in attending Seton. Clara Bannigan graduated in May 2009, and is a freshman at Christopher Newport University studying music; and Alice Bannigan is a sophomore this year.

Clara and her family live in Bowie, Maryland, since 1971 and are members of St. Pius X Church. Clara is an active member of the Seton Alumna and is proud to be a member of the first graduating class of Elizabeth Seton High School, the Class of 1963.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO BETTY TAYMOR

• Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I welcome this opportunity to bring to the attention of my colleagues in the Senate that today is the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy at the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

I especially want to recognize the leadership of Betty Taymor, the remarkable founder of this program.

Because of Betty, more than 700 women have been educated in the programs of the center. It is incredibly admired today on the local, State, and national levels, and it is an honor for us to join in congratulating Betty for her unique achievement.

My colleagues and I in our State delegation in Congress have sent a letter to Betty congratulating her on this impressive milestone of public service in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

and our Nation. I look forward to the center's continuing leadership and achievements in the years ahead and I ask that our letter be printed in the RECORD. The information follows:

Ms. Betty Taymor,

*Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy,
McCormack Graduate School of Policy
Studies, University of Massachusetts—Boston,
100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA.*

DEAR MS. TAYMOR: We, the members of the Massachusetts delegation in the United States Congress join in tribute as your friends and colleagues gather to celebrate your extraordinary achievements. You have indeed run against many prevailing winds, and been energized, not subdued, by the challenges you've faced.

We recommend your inspiring book, *Running against the Wind*, to anyone who seeks to understand the progress made by American women in the second half of the last century.

You entered public service as a volunteer, an honorable role shared by many idealistic women throughout our history and were crucial to the abolition of slavery and the emancipation of women. During the Second World War, you joined with others on the home front in the important work of the Red Cross. In time, you sought and won positions of greater responsibility and authority, in Massachusetts and in the national Democratic Party.

You were a personal mentor to many, yet you wanted to do more. With characteristic energy, you created an institutional embodiment of your example in the Program for Women in Politics & Public Policy. This evening's celebration is dedicated to your vision and to the support of the Betty Taymor Fund to further the education of women who share your intellectual and moral fervor. Your courage and determination continue to inspire all good citizens, both men and women, who are committed to equal rights and equal opportunity.

We unite in gratitude and congratulation, Senator John F. Kerry, Senator Paul G. Kirk, Michael E. Capuano, Edward J. Markey, Barney Frank, Richard E. Neal, John W. Olver, William D. Delahunt, James P. McGovern, John F. Tierney, Stephen F. Lynch, Niki Tsongas. •

TRIBUTE TO LTG STEPHEN M. SPEAKES

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today I recognize the distinguished service of LTG Stephen M. Speakes as he prepares to retire after 35 years of exceptional service to this Nation as an officer of the U.S. Army. I have had the pleasure to work with General Speakes over the last several years as he served as the Army deputy chief of staff, G-8, a position in which he was responsible for matching the service's resources to the needs of our soldiers. His compassionate leadership, unwavering commitment and selfless dedication are exemplified in his enumerable contributions throughout his distinguished career.

General Speakes was commissioned as an armor officer in 1974. He began his career with troop-leading assignments in the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss, TX, and the Third Brigade, Third Infantry Division in Aschaffenburg, Germany. He commanded the 2d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at Bad Kissingen, and the 2d "Blackjack" Brigade in the First Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX.

General Speakes' service also includes assignments on the Joint Staff with the strategic arms reduction talks nuclear negotiations team in the Joint Staff's J5 Directorate for Strategic Plans and Policy, as a war planner in the Joint Staff's J7 Directorate for Operational Plans and Joint Force Development, and on the Army Staff's Force Development Directorate. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, General Speakes received a master's degree in government from Georgetown University and was a fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. At Harvard, he coauthored a study of U.N. peace enforcement, "A Blue Helmet Combat Force."

His senior assignments include a tour in Europe beginning in 1997 as the V Corps G3 and chief of staff. He then served as the deputy G3 at U.S. Army Forces Command before assignment as the chief of staff of the III Corps in August 2001. From August 2002 thru June 2003, General Speakes served as the assistant division commander of the 4th Infantry Division, Mechanized, and deployed in that capacity for Operation Iraqi Freedom. In June 2003, he departed Tikrit, Iraq, and reported to Kuwait as the deputy commanding general, Third U.S. Army and Coalition Forces Land Component Command. While there, he oversaw the redeployment of 250,000 soldiers and marines as the United States executed the first Iraq force rotation. Returning to the United States, General Speakes served as the director, force development on the G-8 staff from August 2004 to December 2006 before assuming his current responsibilities.

His lovely wife, Mrs. Gigi Speakes, has supported General Speakes and all the members of his commands in every assignment for the past 30 years. She has been integral to all the contributions that this Army team has been able to make to soldiers, the Army and the Nation. She is an outstanding volunteer in all aspects of her service to the Army.

The Speakes are the epitome of an Army family. Clearly, General and Mrs. Speakes' greatest achievement was the raising of two incredible sons, Grant and Brennan. Both are Army officers who have served on multiple deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Their continued success in the military is the fruit of their parents' enduring love and dedication to them and other junior soldiers.

On behalf of the Senate and the United States of America, I thank General Speakes, his wife Gigi, and his entire family for the commitment, sacrifice, and contribution that they have made throughout his honorable military service. I congratulate them on completing an exceptional and successful career, and wish them the greatest